12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

342
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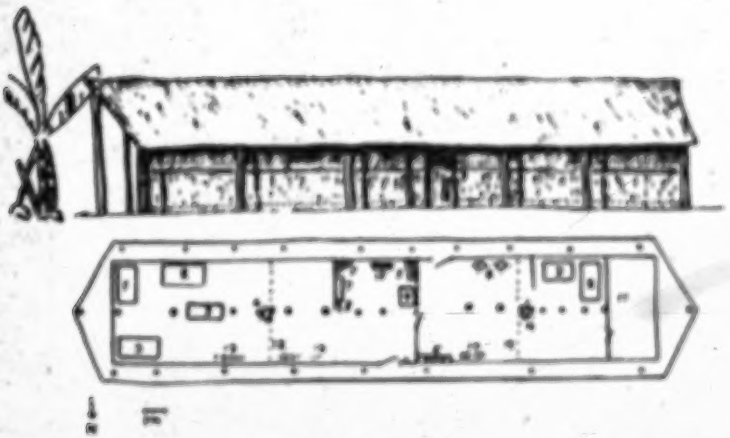

An ikhaya in the village of Kiwambia, the district of Rungwale, belonging to a man with two wives. The rooms have bamboo ceilings from dotted lines to either gable. Posts reaching to ridge of roof are filled in. 1, husband's bed; 2, wife's bed; 3, child's bed; 4, hearth; 5, bowl' room; 6, water jar; 7, room; 8, ladder; 9, table; 10, stools; 11, store-room; 12, dotted lines show limitation of ceiling; 13, small objects; 14, working material; 15, sleeping mat.

born. On page 351, he reports how the boys, when 7 or 10 years old, will leave their parents' house to live in long, rectangular cowhouse-like houses big or small, in a special youngsters' quarter at the far end of the village. On page 358 he writes: In many cases you do not know for certain whether you are dealing with a youngsters' house or a cowhouse—for the cattle may well be kept in these houses—or the herdsmen may sleep in the cowhouses. However, this mainly holds true of the low-lying Konde country, while on the other hand, in the high country, the cattle is usually kept in the dwelling houses. On pages 371 and 372, he relates how the cattle is tied to posts at night, and he shows a picture of a cowhouse.

He also refers (on page 376) to the use of the rectangular house for married men besides the boys. The difference is seen in the fact that these houses are not roughcast with mud, as this work is the province of women. Finally, he reports that, during the last few years of his stay in the Konde country, he saw Konde houses being built under increasing influence of the coastal culture, in imitation of the Swahili houses. They were roughcast with mud inside and out, and had a verandah supported by posts.

In 1955, many dakaga could be seen. Some were for the cattle, but most were dwelling houses for married people. (Boys aged 7–10 and upwards until the marriageable age lived in youngsters' boys' houses, the material of which was not bamboo, but a thinner grass, resembling bamboo very much. These houses stood

14: Lehmann E-5 (1939) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

begin later and continue till noon or beyond. The energetic ones sometimes hoe again for an hour or two in the late afternoon. Different crops are planted at different seasons of the year so that there is always some hoeing to be done." (G. Wilson, Introduction, p. 260).

The putting of maize-grains as seed into the earth is the women's work, the sowing of millet (*malesi*) of both sexes. If you ask the men after they had come home from their work: "*Mukumbide ifivanya fya nongi?*", "Whose fields did you hoe?", the answer often may be: "*Tukumbide ifivanya fya tata!*" We have hoed the fields of our father.

In former times, the Nyakyusa had a lot of ceremonies relating to the beginning of the hoeing season and of the beginning of the harvest-work. They are, however, nowadays nearly extinguished under the influence of European culture.

With respect to the beginning of the hoeing season, a very comprehensive ceremony had to be carried out by the chief in community whith the *unganga* (medicine man) for providing the fields with extraordinary (*-siya*) power (*amaka*): *amaka amasiya*, in this case: fertility.

When the crop was ripe, it was (at first) forbidden (*mwiko*) to take anything from the crop before the chief had given the permission. First the oldest male villagers informed the chief that it may be now the just time to give the crop free for the people, saying: "The people is hungry, we will now give them to eat!" Then the chief ordered that 6 or 8 (maize') corn-cobs were brought to him, and he sent these corn-cobs by a messenger to the (holy) offering-grove where they must be put down. After that has been correctly executed, he gave the permission for reaping the new crop.

(NB. It was believed that those corn-cobs put into the offering-grove were eaten especially from the leopards. The powderes bones of the leopards were considered important ingredients of the consecration drink which the chief had to take at his initiation ceremonies and which should give him the strength (*amaka*) of a leopard, so that he also was called "the leopard" or "the leopard chief".)

4. *Herding the Cattle and Cleansing the Stables.* The sociological importance of cattle among the Nyakyusa and the specific practice among them of herding the cattle by herdboys, that is also of highly sociological importance for the structure of the Nyakyusa society, is already described by G. Wilson (Introduction, p. 389 f).

The cleansing of the stables of which the Nyakyusa possess a great number of very well built ones, which have also sometimes a considerable length — apart from the cattle kraals —, is the task of

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the women, but the men are responsible for keeping the floor of the stable in good repair. For this purpose a specific tool is used, called ukutoba indobelu. It is round on top, flattened on the lower side and provided with a handle.

224
5. Hunting. Sometimes the Nyakyusa go out to hunt, but nowadays hunting is much more restricted than in former times as described e. g by Mackenzie in his book: "The spirit-ridden Konde" (London 1925). This record, however, deals mostly with the Ngonde of the environment of Karonga whose interesting social history was unsurpassably revealed to us by Mr. Godfrey Wilson's treatise: "The Constitution of Ngonde" (The Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, Number Three. Livingstone, Northern Rhodesia 1939.) Hunting in the Nyakyusa country is now curtailed by governmental regulations. Hunting *(ukufuema)*, therefore, does not supply an essential part of the food requirements of the natives. The colobus apes on the slopes of the Rungwe volcano and the Poroto Mountains are sometimes killed for their attractive black and white skins, but fortunately this is now forbidden by the government. Otherwise these apes would be exterminated in quite a short time, since the skins of these apes are in great demand with some Europeans for rugs and covers. Naturally, the hunting of lions and especially of leopards, which even nowadays still cause great damage, is not restricted.

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The hunting of game for food is often done with dogs *(imbwa)* which have small bells *(ingesi)* on collars round their necks. Thereby the hunter *(umfuemi)* always knows the whereabouts of his dog. The chase is continued till the dog or dogs are exhausted. The object of the hunt *(umfuemu)* is generally a small type of antelope *(akanya)*, e. g. in the environment of Mwakalele, as I was instructed. The usual time for hunting is the cooler season, but to-day a permit of the government is also required.

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223
Catching birds by means of traps *(usutegu, pl. imitegu)* is still common in the Nyakyusa area. I have also seen such traps constructed by means of the flicking-gallow's principle also in the vicinity of Utengule among the Safwa. The herd boys especially set traps to catch quails *(imbesi)* when the malesi (millet) harvest is over. Sometimes smaller birds are also coursed until they are exhausted and then slain. One day I found a stick vertically put on the soil and with a triangle made of smaller sticks at its top. The horizontal part of which was smeared with an adhesive substance. I was told that this was a trap for birds.

14: Lehmann E-5 (1939)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

343 Also the stables I saw were very clean; their length is adjusted to the number of cattle which are sheltered therein. Sometimes a wooden hoop is to be found in such a stable, hanging down from the ceiling. [251] The inside of the hoop is filled with a wicker-work whose meshes are dense enough to hold fruits to be dried. If such a hoop is hanging in the stable being out of use, a bag made of leaves containing pumpkin seeds *(inyungu)* for later planting may be fastened to it, and on the beams of 233 the framework of the walls you may find a plaited leather neckband *(ulukoba)* for cows destined to hold a cow's bell *(ibengala)*. The sound of the bells of the cattle gave already great delight to the first European visitors of Nyakyusa and Ngonde Land, as we can read with Fotheringham (p. 24): "It is a pretty sight to see the herd coming into villages in the evening, and pleasant to hear the tinkle of the bells which are suspended from their necks, recalling in homely quietude the peaceful scenes of the Swiss."

184 101 The daily life of the Nyakyusa differs more or less among the different ethnic groups which in former times had been independent units. Nowadays, however, all those groups who have similar speech and customs and share, therefore, a progressing common culture, only distinguished by minor local peculiarities, are called by the common name "Nyakyusa" (Cf. G. Wilson: An Introduction to Nyakyusa Society. Bantu Studies, Vol. X, 1936, p. 294 f).

Synopsis

030 Verfasser beschreibt in diesem zweiten Bericht die verschiedenen Arbeiten aus dem Alltagsleben der Nyakyusa. Die Betreuung der großen Rinderherden, einschließlich des Melkens, ist Männerarbeit, die Frauen reinigen nur die Ställe. Die Männer bebauen die Felder, die Frauen säen, reinigen, ernten und bereiten alle Nahrung zu. Diese Arbeitsteilung fand Verfasser 1934 noch unangetastet, dagegen waren die zahlreichen mit Saat und Ernte verbundenen Zeremonien durch den europäischen Einfluß fast verschwunden. Ebenso war der Verfall der traditionellen Künste und Handwerke weit fortgeschritten durch europäische Einwirkungen wie durch die überall verstreuten indischen Händler als Vermittler der europäischen Waren. Diese hatten auch die traditionelle Kleidung abgewandelt (als die Europäer kamen, gingen die Eingeborenen noch überwiegend nackt). Die alten geometrischen Muster, die äußere Hüttenwände und Türen schmückten, waren zum Teil mit Zeichnungen von Fahrrädern, Autos, Flugzeugen u.s. durchsetzt. Während früher auch das Alltagsleben der Nyakyusa in deren verschiedenen einheimischen Gruppen deutliche Unterschiede aufwies, sind diese ehemals unabhängigen Einheiten unter den europäischen Einwirkungen mehr und mehr kulturell zusammengewachsen.